

Message Text

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ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SSM-03 IO-13 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04

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FM AMEMBASSY AMMAN

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 1140

INFO AMEMBASSY BEIRUT

AMEMBASSY CAIRO

AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS

AMCONSUL JERUSALEM

AMEMBASSY JIDDA

AMEMBASSY KUWAIT

AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV

AMEMBASSY TRIPOLI

C O N F I D E N T I A L AMMAN 1873

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, PLO, SY, JO

SUBJECT: JORDAN-PLO-SYRIAN RELATIONS

REF: DAMASCUS 1149

1. MINISTER OF STATE FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS HASSAN IBRAHIM, WHO PARTICIPATED IN RECENT GOJ-PLO DIALOGUE MEETINGS IN AMMAN, TOLD EMBOFF TODAY THERE IS NO TRUTH WHATSOEVER TO KUWAITI PRESS STORY CITED REFTEL THAT JORDAN WILL DISTRIBUTE JORDANIAN PASSPORTS TO PALESTINIAN HOLDERS OF EGYPTIAN, SYRIAN AND LEBANESE TRAVEL DOCUMENTS. HE SAID MATTER WAS NEVER DISCUSSED AT RECENT GOJ-PLO MEETINGS. SUCH A MOVE WOULD NOT ONLY INCREASE SECURITY PROBLEMS FOR JORDAN, IBRAHIM SAID, BUT WOULD ENLARGE AND INJECT NEW ELEMENTS INTO LOCAL PALESTINIAN COMMUNITY WHICH GOJ DOES NOT WANT.

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2. IN LATTER REGARD, IBRAHIM SAID THAT PLO HAS BEEN PRESSING FOR OPPORTUNITY TO ESTABLISH CLOSER AND "WORKING TIES" WITH PALESTINIAN COMMUNITY IN JORDAN WITH A VIEW TO RECRUITING FOR POSSIBLE MILITARY ACTIVITIES IN WEST BANK AND TO ESTABLISHING ITSELF AS POLITICAL FRAMEWORK THROUGH WHICH JORDANIAN

PALESTINIANS RELATE TO WEST BANK. IBRAHIM STATED GOJ, WHICH PURSUING PEACEFUL SETTLEMENT OF ARAB-ISRAELI PROBLEMS, HAS NO INTENTION OF ALLOWING PLO TO ENGAGE IN ACTIVITIES WITHIN JORDAN THAT ARE AIMED AT MILITARY RESOLUTION OF ARAB-ISRAELI ISSUES. IF MILITARY APPROACH IS EVER ADOPTED BY GOJ, HE CONTINUED, THAT WILL BE A MATTER TO BE HANDLED BY REGULAR ARMED FORCES, NOT PLO. MOREOVER, IBRAHIM EXPLAINED, NEITHER GOJ, MOST EAST BANKERS, NOR MOST LOCAL PALESTINIANS WANT RETURN OF PLO POLITICAL ACTIVITY IN JORDAN THAT WOULD BE LIKELY TO GENERATE TENSIONS BETWEEN JORDANIANS OF EAST BANK AND PALESTINIAN ORIGIN.

3. ON CURRENT STATE OF JORDAN-SYRIA RELATIONS, IBRAHIM'S REMARKS SUPPORTED OTHER REPORTS THAT RAPPROCHEMENT SLOWED DOWN CONSIDERABLY. HE SAID RELATIONS NOW AT A POINT WHERE SYRIANS WANT GREAT LEAP FORWARD TO UNITY, ALTHOUGH THEY HAVE NOT SPELLED OUT IN GREAT DETAIL WHAT THAT MEANS INSTITUTIONALLY. JORDAN, ON OTHER HAND, WANTS TO CONTINUE WITH STEP-BY-STEP APPROACH OF INCREASING AREAS OF FUNCTIONAL COOPERATION UNTIL VIABLE ECONOMIC, SOCIAL AND POLITICAL COMMUNITY EMERGES TO SUPPORT SHARED GOVERNMENT INSTITUTIONS. THOSE INSTITUTIONS, IBRAHIM CONTINUED, SHOULD BE AT MOST CONFEDERAL, IN JORDAN'S VIEW, HEADED NOT BY A SINGLE PERSON BUT A COUNCIL WHOSE CHAIRMANSHIP WOULD ROTATE PERHAPS ANNUALLY AMONG ITS MEMBERS. MOREOVER, IBRAHIM STATED, JORDAN SEEMS MORE CONFIDENTIAL

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INTERESTED THAN DOES SYRIA IN HAVING THE EVENTUAL CONFEDERATION CONTAIN ARAB STATES ADDITIONAL TO JORDAN AND SYRIA; "WE WOULD FEEL MORE COMFORTABLE", HE ADDED. FINALLY, HE COMMENTED THAT WHILE JORDAN STILL FINDS GOOD REASONS FOR CLOSER TIES WITH SYRIA AND OTHER ARAB STATES AS WELL, THE FLUIDITY OF THE UPCOMING PEACE PROCESS ARGUES FOR SOME "MARCHING IN PLACE" ON THAT SCORE NOW UNTIL WE SEE HOW EVENTS ASSOCIATED WITH THE PEACE PROCESS AND SETTLEMENT TERMS MAY AFFECT THE CONDITIONS OF ARAB ASSOCIATIONS.

4. HASSAN IBRAHIM IS A FOREIGN POLICY DOER, NOT A CONCEPTUALIZER, AND HIS IDEAS USUALLY REPRESENT POLICY OR ATTITUDES WHICH HE HAS ACQUIRED FROM HIGHER CIRCLES --I.E., THE PALACE, THE PRIME MINISTER, AND SOMETIMES HIS CAREER MENTOR EX-PRIME MINISTER ZAID RIFAI. WHATEVER THE CASE, HIS HARD LINE VIEWS ON THE PLO AND HIS DESCRIPTION OF THE CURRENT STATE OF GOJ-SAG RELATIONS FIT THE TENOR OF SENIOR GOJ

ATTITUDES WHICH EMBASSY HAS REPORTED ELSEWHERE.
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